A

REPORT

OF TWO

SPEECHES

DELIVERED BY THE

RIGHT HON. LORD VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH,

IN THE DEBATE ON THE

REGENCY BILL,

ON APRIL 11th, 1799.

CORK:

PRINTED BY GEORGE CHERRY,
(*FOR THE PROPRIETORS*)
AT THE ADVERTISER OFFICE, PATRICK'S-STREET.

1799.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT was hoped the Two SPEECHES delivered by Lord Viſcount *CASTLEREAGH*, in the Debate on the REGENCY BILL, would, before this, have been publiſhed by Authority, and in a more perfect ſhape than they appeared in, in the Newſpapers. This however not having been done, the Editor thinks it his duty to give to the Publick, in ſomewhat of a more permanent form than that of a daily print, the moſt correct Report of his Lordſhip's Speeches which he has been able to procure, although he is ſenſible, it is but a very inadequate outline of what was actually delivered.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 1799.

REGENCY BILL.

THE Order for the Houſe going into Committee on the Regency Bill being read,

Lord CASTLEREAGH roſe. His Lordſhip ſaid, that when this Bill had been originally propoſed by the Right Hon. Member who introduced it, he had declared his intention not to oppoſe the meaſure, provided it ſtrictly followed the principle of the Act of Annexation, and if it remedied all the evils, which the principles adopted by the Houſe in 1789 had produced. On the ſecond reading of the Bill he had ſtated ſeveral of the inconveniencies which aroſe from our preſent ſituation, which would not only be continued, but increaſed by any inadequate meaſure on the ſubject. He was

now obliged to ſay, that if the Bill was to be paſſed in its preſent form, the inconveniences and evils which he had enumerated would by no means be obviated, and that he therefore could not accept it as a cure for the evil it was intended to remedy. On arguing the preſent Bill he thought he ſhould not do himſelf juſtice, were he to confine himſelf ſtrictly within the limits of its proviſions: he would therefore advert, not merely to the preciſe object of the bill before the houſe, but would reſort to the principle from which it flowed; *that* principle was the danger which aroſe, and muſt for ever ariſe, from the poſſibility of two independent legiſlatures in the ſame empire adopting diſcordant meaſures on imperial queſtions. The Right Hon. Gentleman had adverted to one of the effects which reſulted from this principle, but had totally neglected the cauſe; it was his duty rather to apply to the cauſe, which was the ſource of numerous inconveniences, which could alone be cured by its removal. The bill merely took up a ſingle point out of many which flowed from that *cauſe*; he would not enumerate them all; however they were all points of diviſion and ſeparation. But no man could overlook the danger which reſulted from two independent legiſlatures in the great queſtions of peace, of war, of general trade and commerce, and of treaties with foreign nations, not to mention the difficulties which aroſe from the admiralty juriſdiction, and the great ſubject of our religious eſtabliſhment, which muſt be regulated on imperial principles. As to the firſt of

theſe queſtions, (the queſtion of Peace and War) what was not to be apprehended on the ſubject, under our ſtate of ſeparate legiſlatures? How was it poſſible to conceive that the Empire could continue as at preſent, whilſt all parts of it were to receive equal protection, and only one part of it to ſuffer the burdens of that protection? Muſt we not, of neceſſity and in juſtice, look to ſome ſettlement of imperial contribution? And ſo ſoon as a ſyſtem of contribution ſhould be eſtabliſhed, was there any queſtion as to peace and war, which would not agitate every part of the country? And ſhould we not be bound to conſider with ſcrupulouſneſs every imperial meaſure which might lead to the demand of contributions from the people? If the queſtion of peace and war was important at preſent, how much more intereſting would it become then! The ſubject would aſſume a new aſpect, every circumſtance of continental politics muſt be matter of our ſolicitude and come within our diſcuſſion. Why had we not differed from Great Britain in former wars? It was from this circumſtance, that Great Britain ſupported the whole expence, and wars were not in any degree expenſive to Ireland. Wars have recently increaſed in their expence enormouſly. Ireland, as a ſeparate country, poſſeſſing all the advantages of the commerce and all the advantages of the protection of England, will naturally be bound to contribute her juſt proportion for the continuance of thoſe advantages. When that ſhall be the caſe, how can it be expected that ſhe will tamely

follow Great Britain with that ſubmiſſion and ſubſervi-ency which has hitherto marked her conduct? If parliament were to conſent to ſuch humiliation, would they carry with them the public confidence? The feelings of the people muſt always be agitated in proportion to their intereſts; they would not eaſily be reconciled to have their contributions called forth to ſupport meaſures which their repreſentatives did not diſcuſs, nor would they ſuffer without jealouſy, queſtions which affected their deareſt intereſts to be decided in a Parliament in which they were not repreſented. What then is the ſecurity for the connexion of the two kingdoms? Is it the diſcretion of the Iriſh Parliament? No man had a higher reſpect than himſelf for their prudence, their liberality and their loyalty. But had not that diſcretion already failed in ſo remarkable an inſtance, as to prove that it was at beſt but a bad ſecurity? It was againſt the principle of human nature that one country ſhould voluntarily and regularly follow the dictates of another; it was againſt the common principles of pride and independence, which muſt ever grow and increaſe with the importance of the kingdom. In proportion therefore to our wealth and ſtrength, the principle of diſcretion would be weakened, and the ſole ſecurity for the continuance of our connexion would vaniſh. His Lordſhip, after theſe general obſervations, reverted to the bill before the houſe: He ſaid the bill certainly went to enact that the regal power of the two kingdoms ſhould reſide in

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the ſame perſon: But how did it ſecure that end? The Crown had at preſent an undoubted prerogative of appointing a regency in certain caſes; whereas the bill, as it was framed, entirely deſtroyed that prerogative. The bill was alſo ſo drawn, that if it paſſed in its preſent form, the regent of Great Britain could not appoint a Lord Lieutenant, for the regent would be merely a deputy, and no deputy could appoint a deputy. If ſuch was the objection to the frame, there were greater objections to the ſubſtance, of the bill. If it were complete as to the *perſon* who ſhould be regent; it did not define his *power*, which might be of equal conſequence. The competency and propriety of parliament limiting the powers of the regent had been fully eſtabliſhed in the Britiſh parliament. But how was that principle applied in the bill? The proviſo enacted that the regent of Ireland ſhould be ſubject to the ſame reſtrictions as the regent of England. Here the right hon. gentleman gave up the ſupremacy of the Iriſh legiſlature, and transferred to the parliament of England the right of impoſing reſtrictions on the regent of Ireland, but he gave up this right in the moſt abſurd manner imaginable. He gives the parliament of Great Britain a right to form reſtrictions for our regent, but does not allow them to conſider the applicability of thoſe reſtrictions; he makes the reſtrictions impoſed on the regent of Great Britain attach, right or wrong, on the regent of Ireland; and forgetting that what is expedient in one country may

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be inexpedient in another, he makes the ſame regulations fortuitouſly attach to different governments, differently conſtituted and differently circumſtanced. Certainly the queſtion of reſtrictions cannot be avoided; but by whom are they to be impoſed? There were only three methods; firſt by the parliament of Great Britain; ſecond by the parliament of Ireland; third, by treaty. If the laſt were to be reſorted to, he feared the effort would be vain and futile; and as in the caſe of the commercial propoſitions, the queſtion of policy would be ſacrificed to the difficulty of ſettling the queſtion of authority. If the power were to be given to the parliament of Great Britain, he then fully admitted that ſuch a proviſion would meet the difficulties of the caſe, but this could not be accompliſhed without a ſurrender of the ſupremacy of the Iriſh Parliament. But if the reſtrictions were to be impoſed by the Iriſh parliament, in that caſe nothing was done, the queſtion would be ſtill afloat, would be open to every poſſible cavil, and ſubject as much as ever to the influence of faction and cabal. His Lordſhip proceeded to ſay, that our connexion with England chiefly depended on the prerogatives of the crown of both kingdoms being exerciſed under the controul of one imperial cabinet. He would then ſuppoſe a caſe, which was eaſy to be imagined and natural to occur, that the Engliſh parliament ſhould delegate the royal authority to a perſon of whoſe principles and councils the Iriſh parliament was jealous. Ireland would be

bound

bound to adopt this individual as their regent. Altho' the nomination of the perſon was by this bill placed out of their power, the right of reſtraining his authority would be in their power. How would the Iriſh parliament naturally proceed to reſtrain him? might they not require that his prerogatives ſhould be exerciſed by the advice and under the controul of an Iriſh council reſponſible to the Iriſh parliament alone? A Lord Lieutenant is now controuled by the Britiſh crown, and the Britiſh cabinet; he would be then controuled by an Iriſh cabinet; and inſtead of one general executive for the whole empire, we ſhould have two executives, as well as two legiſlatives; and be ſubjected to the effects which muſt unavoidably reſult from diſtinct governments. His lordſhip then argued, that the only mode of ſettling the queſtion was by diſtinctly ſurrendering to the Britiſh parliament the whole authority on this point. And if the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to follow up the Act of Annexation, and to enact, that the power which created the crown of Ireland and limited its ſucceſſion, ſhould be competent to regulate the queſtion of regency in all caſes, he would then ſet the queſtion at reſt; if he ſtopped ſhort of *that*, he would be doing nothing. His lordſhip aſked, whence did the difficulty on this and ſimilar queſtions ariſe? Was it not from the final ſettlement, as it was called, of 1782? Antecedent to that period, the parliament of this kingdom was in the habit of ſubmitting to the parliament of another country, and *that* parliament was allowed a general ſuper-

intendence

intendence in all caſes of imperial legiſlation. Since that period, the parliament of Ireland would not ſuffer any other authority to interfere in the concerns of this kingdom, and hence all the inconveniences and dangers had ariſen which he had ſtated. He was however ſurpriſed, that any man ſhould call the meaſure of 1782 a final adjuſtment between the countries, which went but to one principle, and ſet afloat every other. He called the houſe to look at the weakneſs of the meaſure itſelf, which from every ſubſequent event to the preſent day, had ſhewn itſelf to be entirely inadequate to adjuſt the queſtions which diſturbed the empire; he called on the houſe to look to the reſolutions of the Britiſh parliament, which declared *that* ſettlement not to be final; and he called on them to advert to the expreſſions of thoſe miniſters who had framed that ſettlement. His lordſhip here ſtated Mr. Fox's ſentiments from his ſpeech on the commercial propoſitions in 1785, as follows:

" JULY 22, 1785.

" Mr. Fox, (ſpeaking of the ſettlement of 1782,) " declared, that no idea of a commercial regulation " had been entertained by adminiſtration of that day, " in propoſing that reſolution. There were, he ſaid, " at that time certainly ſome regulations wanting be- " tween the two countries, but thoſe regulations were " to extend to political objects alone, and not to com- " mercial; they went partly to eſtabliſh what was " much wanted, ſomething to replace that power,

" which,

" which, in their ſtruggles for independence, the Iriſh
" had imprudently inſiſted on having aboliſhed; and
" which he had himſelf given up, in compliance with
" the ſtrong current of the prejudices of that nation,
" though with a reluctance that nothing but irreſiſtible
" neceſſity could have overcome. The power which he
" wiſhed to have ſeen replaced, was that which had
" been ſo often of late under diſcuſſion in parliament,
" and which had been variouſly termed, being ſome-
" times called commercial, at other times external,
" and frequently imperial legiſlation, that power
" being precipitately aboliſhed, that ſome ſuccedaneum
" ſhould be found for it; for without one general and
" ſuperintending authority to embrace and compre-
" hend the whole ſyſtem of the navigation of the em-
" pire, it muſt neceſſarily happen that much confuſion
" and great inconvenience would take place."

" When he had ſaid, that he had regretted having
" given it the power of external legiſlation, as likely
" to prejudice the general intereſts of the empire, and
" therefore neceſſary to be replaced, he deſired not
" to be underſtood as meaning to ſeek for it again;
" what he meant was, to find ſome ſyſtem, that with-
" out reclaiming the power, or infringing in the
" ſmalleſt degree on the full emancipation and inde-
" pendence formally conceded to Ireland, ſhould
" afford the means of avoiding that confuſion which
" was otherwiſe ſo much to be dreaded."

His Lordſhip ſaid he did not argue from theſe words however ſtrong and impreſſive, that Mr. Fox had a legiſlative union in contemplation in 1782, but he evidently wanted ſome permanent principle of connexion as a ſubſtitute for what he had ſurrendered. Mr. Fox was probably not able at that period to look a legiſlative union in the face; he was obliged to go in ſearch of ſome meaſure of correſponding force, if it could be found, but he ſearched in vain. It was ridiculous to conſider the ſettlement of 1782 as final, becauſe it was ſo ſtated in the Addreſs of the time; we muſt judge of a meaſure from its ſpirit, not from its words; from its principles and effects, not from the language in which in may be cloathed; and from the known and declared intention of its framers, not from the mere phraſe in which it may happen to be expreſſed. His Lordſhip then concluded that there was no alternative but to remain ſubject to the preſent evil, or to embrace the whole remedy. Let not gentlemen flatter themſelves that by applying half-meaſures the danger of ſeparation could be cured; the principles of the bill of annexation might bear us out in ſurrendering our legiſlative independence to Great Britain in the caſe of a Regency; but the ſpirit of the country would not bear it in others. Such a conduct was full of delicacy, and it was big with danger; it involved the principle of intruſting power without repreſentation, a principle which had produced the loſs of America, and was incompatible with the Britiſh Conſtitution. He would therefore acquieſce in the Right

Hon.

Hon. Gentleman's bill, if made adequate and effectual; but he ſhould be criminal if he were to blindfold the people on the ſubject, by ſubmitting to half-meaſures; and as in the whole it was but a feeble attempt to cure a general evil by a partial remedy, he did not think it his duty to make himſelf reſponſible for its effects, although he might not oppoſe it. If it ſhould be made adequate to its object in the committee, he would not afterwards reſiſt it; if it ſhould remain inadequate, he would not diſgrace himſelf by ſupporting it.

The Right Honourable the Speaker having in the Committee delivered the Speech, which has been ſince publiſhed,

Lord CASTLEREAGH roſe in reply. His Lordſhip ſaid, that he had been highly gratified by the opportunity which had been offered to the Right Hon. Gentleman to ſtate at large his ſentiments upon the queſtion of UNION; that he had no doubt if an opportunity had preſented itſelf, he would have availed himſelf of his privilege at an earlier period; and certainly the Right Hon. Gentleman, in entering ſo much at large into the ſubject, had merely done credit to himſelf, to the ſituation which he filled, and the oppoſition which he had profeſſed. He felt the utmoſt diffidence in replying to the ſpeech of the Right Hon. Gentleman, as he fully acknowledged the great ſuperiority of his experience and abilities; and he lamented that it was impoſſible for him to enter into all

the numerous topicks and details, which his power of condenſation had enabled him to compreſs together. He ſhould be happy, however, could he at any time be enabled to conſider and meet them article by article: for he felt that every thing which he had advanced was ſo capable of refutation, that the reſult of what he heard was to impreſs upon his mind more ſtrongly than ever, that the exiſtence of this country depended upon a Legiſlative Union with Great Britain. He would firſt advert to the inſinuation made by the Speaker, that he had declared that private opinions were more to be relied upon than records of Parliament. This was not his argument; he had ſtated that parliamentary documents were to be explained according to their ſpirit, tendency and effect, more than according to their words; and that the beſt teſtimony, as to the intent and meaning of a meaſure, was the declaration of the Miniſters who framed it. It was on this principle he had quoted the ſpeech of Mr. Fox. The Speaker could not pretend to inſinuate that Mr. Fox was not Miniſter in 1782, much leſs could he inſinuate that he did not know his own intentions at that period. As to the ſettlement of 1782, ſo much contended to be final, he had ſtated it himſelf to be ſo, as to the points of grievance then brought forward:—It was undoubtedly final, as to the ſubſerviency of the Iriſh to the Britiſh Legiſlature; but as to all other queſtions of intercourſe, of policy, of reciprocal benefit and advantage

between

between the two kingdoms it could not be final; it was not ſo in its nature, it had been proved not to be ſo from its conſequences, and it was the height of abſurdity to argue that it was. Does the Right Hon. Gentleman think that the two ſeparate legiſlatures can keep the countries connected by the mere principle of their independency; or that in itſelf and in its nature the principle of independency is a meaſure of connexion? No, Sir, the two kingdoms are at preſent kept together by the feelings of the people, and not by the adjuſtment of 1782, which is totally inadequate. But the Right Hon. Gentleman relies on the great Seal of England.—Will the great Seal keep down the jealouſy of the people of Ireland? Will the great Seal deſtroy French principles? Will the great Seal deſtroy that ſeparation and diſtinctneſs of intereſts upon which the enemies of the empire erect their hopes of dividing the iſlands? But it was ſaid this ſettlement of 1782 had kept the country in peace until its tranquillity was diſturbed by Mr. Pitt's raſhneſs in introducing the queſtion of an Union. He appealed to the Houſe if that was a fair and candid ſtatement of the caſe?—was that a ſtatement which became the Right Hon. Gentleman? He wiſhed not to exaggerate the diſtreſſes of the country: he wiſhed not to expatiate on the diſtractions by which ſhe was convulſed; it was not a ſtate of peace, it was not a ſtate of tranquillity which Mr. Pitt had endeavoured to diſturb, but it was the ſtate of our miſeries and diſtractions to

which

which Mr. Pitt was ready to ſacrifice his own peace, in the hope of finding a remedy. But when the Right Hon. Gentleman accuſes Mr. Pitt's raſhneſs as the cauſe of the diſturbances of Ireland, what was his own conduct? Was that calculated to allay the heats, and cool the animoſities of the country? or did not he and his friends exert themſelves in inflaming the minds of the people? When the queſtion of Union was firſt mentioned, did not he uſe all his influence to prevent its being diſcuſſed at all, as a queſtion not to be admitted? and when the Government conſented not to preſs the ſubject, but to leave it till the temper of Parliament ſhould change, did not he and his friends preſs for immediate diſcuſſion, in order to keep up the flame they had created? The Right Hon. Gentleman had complained of the language uſed in another houſe by Mr. Pitt, and of his own ſpeech being garbled by order of Government; what was the truth on the latter point? So ſoon as Mr. Pitt's ſpeech was ſuppoſed to have arrived, there was a natural curioſity in the public to read it; he therefore had ſent a friend with the firſt copy he had received to a printer, to which copy a curtailed report of the Speaker's ſpeech in 1785 was annexed. As ſoon as he heard that this ſpeech was not a juſt ſtatement, he deſired *that* ſtatement to be ſubſtituted, which the Speaker himſelf ſhould approve; and it was done accordingly. As to Mr. Pitt's taking advantage of the Speaker's opinion in 1785, was it not acknowledged that the opinions of

great

great men on great ſubjects, when truly quoted, have great weight and may be fairly adduced? and was there one point in which Mr. Pitt had miſrepreſented him? But if this conduct was not candid in Mr. Pitt, did not the Speaker himſelf commence the attack?—What were the inſinuations in his anſwer to the freeholders of Louth? Did he not ſtate that the ſettlement in 1782 was a final ſettlement on all conſtitutional queſtions, and did he not then inſinuate that Mr. Pitt in propoſing an Union was breaking that ſettlement, was infringing a compact, and violating the faith of Great Britain, ſolemnly pledged to Ireland? and would not Mr. Pitt have been deficient in his duty to himſelf and the public, if he had not vindicated his conduct from ſo foul an aſperſion? and had not Mr. Pitt a right to defend himſelf, if poſſible, by the authority of his accuſer, and to reſent the accuſation? Did Mr. Pitt in his defence quote the Right Hon. Gentleman untruly, or did he make any uncandid inference from his ſpeeches? He quoted the Right Hon. Gentleman to have ſaid, "Things cannot remain as they "are, commercial jealouſy is rouſed, it will increaſe "with two independent legiſlatures, and without one "united intereſt in commerce, in a commercial empire, "political Union will receive many ſhocks; and ſe-"paration of intereſt will occaſion ſeparation of con-"nexion, which every honeſt Iriſhman muſt ſhudder "to look at as poſſible."

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Did Mr. Pitt argue from this paſſage that the Speaker was an advocate for a Legiſlative Union? No, but he ſhewed from it that the Speaker confeſſed that danger was to be apprehended from the colliſion of ſeparate legiſlatures, which in their very nature were vehicles of jealouſy and inſtruments of ſeparation. Mr. Pitt quoted the paſſage he ſtated from the Right Hon. Gentleman's ſpeech on the Commercial Propoſitions, which were conſidered by him as fraught with the greateſt poſſible advantages for Ireland. That meaſure however failed; and what was it that produced its failure? Jealouſy, not of a commercial but political nature: it failed becauſe an high-minded nation like ours will be more rouſed by queſtions of political authority, than commercial advantage. But had not the Speaker made a further attack on Mr. Pitt? in his anſwer to the reſolutions of the county of Louth, had he not ſtated that, "The ſurrender of our ſeparate "legiſlature would deſtroy the ſecurity of our trade, "and render our advantages precarious; that our "commerce could not be benefited, but might de-"creaſe, by an Union?" Was not then Mr. Pitt called upon to diſprove theſe aſſertions by the Speaker's words in 1785, viz. that "*without an united intereſt* "*in commerce, political Union would receive many ſhocks*;" and to ſhew from theſe words that the Britiſh miniſter was called upon to inſure that connexion on which the

advantages

advantages of Ireland depended: and which (Ireland having declined a compact) could only be ſecured by an Union? When alſo the Speaker had ſtated that the linen trade depended ſolely on the bounties and protection of the Iriſh Parliament, had not Mr. Pitt a right to prove that the proſperity of this trade depends not on the Iriſh bounties, but on the bounties and duties impoſed by the Britiſh Parliament? Let it here be recollected that Mr. Pitt was merely repelling an attack, and that the Right Hon. Gentleman had ſtruck the firſt blow. But how did the Right Hon. Gentleman miſtate Mr. Pitt in talking of the principle of contribution, and how had he miſrepreſented Mr. Pitt? He ſtated that Mr. Pitt's ſole object was to lay his hands upon the purſe of Ireland, whereas the reſolutions produced by Mr. Pitt prove diametrically the reverſe! But does the Right Hon. Gentleman contend that we are not to purſue a liberal ſyſtem towards Great Britain? Does he mean to argue that the expence of Imperial protection is to fall on the ſhoulders of one member of the empire alone, and that the other is to take no ſhare of the burden? Is that the Hon. Gentleman's argument? Is that the principle of connexion which he means to eſtabliſh? I ſtated, Sir, that if the preſent principles of connexion remain, they muſt be followed up by contribution; I ſhewed the danger to the connexion under that circumſtance; and in order to get

rid of my argument, it muſt be contended that Ireland muſt ever remain ſeparate, muſt ever be protected by England, and muſt never contribute to the empire at all. How has the Right Hon. Gentleman miſrepreſented Mr. Pitt, by ſtating that he menaced this country with hoſtility, if we did not embrace an Union; when the whole tendency of Mr. Pitt's ſpeech is to ſhew, that an Union by force would be ruinous, and that it can only be founded on the inclinations of the people? The ſtatement of Mr. Pitt, which has been ſtated as a menace, was neceſſarily brought forward to obviate the aſſertions of the Hon. Gentleman, that our trade was owing ſolely to the independence of the Iriſh Parliament. If Mr. Pitt has ſhewn that the trade, and particularly the linen trade depended not on the Iriſh but the Britiſh Legiſlature, he was forced into the proof by the Right Hon. Gentleman.

The Right Hon. Gentleman had entered at length into a laborious detail upon the commerce of Ireland, and he certainly acknowledged his ſuperiority on ſuch ſubjects; at the ſame time he muſt contend that the commerce of this kingdom was more dependent on England than the commerce of England upon Ireland. He would conſider this part of the ſubject in three points of view; firſt, our commerce with foreign nations, in which we were totally free; ſecondly, our colonial commerce, which was a boon from Great Britain;

Britain; thirdly, our channel trade with Great Britain, which was regulated between the two countries on principles highly advantageous to Ireland.

What was the ſtate of our foreign commerce? On an average of three years of peace previous to 1793, —our exports to foreign nations were 357,324l.—our imports 943,187l. ſo that there was a balance againſt us of 485,863l. per annum. In the average of three years of war to 1797, our exports to foreign nations amounted in value to 239,796l. and our imports to 783,535l. ſo that the balance againſt us was 498,739l. a year.

With regard to our colonial trade, which Ireland enjoys not of right, but of favour from Great Britain, and upon the ſame regulations as Britiſh ſubjects, our average exports to the Britiſh colonies for three years of peace ending 1793, amounted in value to 622,034l. our imports to 465,271l.—of courſe we had an annual balance in our favour of 156,763l.—Again, in the three years of war, to 1797, our average exports to the colonies were 708,846l. and our imports 388,272l.—which, conſequently gives a balance annually in our favour of 320,574l.

But what are the circumſtances of the channel trade? The total value of the exports, generally from this country to Great Britain is 5,612,689l, and the

total value of all Britiſh exports to Ireland, is 3,554,845l.—which gives a balance in our favour of 2,056,844l.—Again, the yearly value of Iriſh manufacture imported into England is, 5,510,825l. while the value of Engliſh manufacture exported annually to Ireland is only 2,087,672l. conſequently the balance in our favour, upon the actual produce and manufacture of the countries is 3,425,153l.

His Lordſhip next called the attention of the Houſe to the regulations of the tariffe between the two countries—every one of which was highly favourable to Ireland. He obſerved that on the whole of the imports into Great Britain from Ireland, valued as he had already ſtated at 5,612,689l per annum. Great Britain only raiſes a revenue of 47,562l. whereas Ireland on the imports from Great Britain—amounting to 3,554,845l. raiſes a large revenue of 648,138l. per annum; beſides receiving from Great Britain, duty free, the important articles of hops, coal, tan, and bark.

His Lordſhip further obſerved, that the trade of Great Britain with Ireland, forms only 1-9th of the groſs commerce of Great Britain, whereas the trade of Ireland with Great Britain forms about 9-10ths of the groſs commerce of Ireland. The imports from Ireland form about 1-8th of the whole imports into Great Britain, and the cuſtoms raiſed on them form

form not the 130th part of the cuſtoms of Great Britain. Again, in our trade with foreign nations, we incur a loſs of little leſs than 500,000l. per annum, while we gain on our trade with the Britiſh colonies, near 400,000l. and on our trade with Great Britain, 2,056,844l. On the whole then, if England loſt her trade with Ireland, ſhe would loſe only 1-9th of her trade. But if Ireland loſt her trade with Great Britain, ſhe would loſe 9-10ths of her trade.

Lord Caſtlereagh next adverted to the aſſertion of the Speaker, that if Great Britain denied her market to Ireland, ſhe could reſort to the colonies of other countries, and could find vent for her manufactures in Spain, in Portugal, and the Eaſt Indies. To theſe aſſertions he would not oppoſe any arguments of his own, but would read to the Committee the arguments of the Right Hon. Gentleman himſelf in 1785, which contained a fuller refutation, and came with higher authority than any ſtatement he could produce.

" The Honourable Gentleman" (meaning Mr. Flood) " ſeems, with others, to undervalue the " Britiſh markets for our linens, and that if Britain " ſhall diſcourage her import, they will find vent " elſewhere. I will not pay him ſo fulſome a compli- " ment as to ſay he underſtands commerce, his ge-

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" nius ſoars perhaps above ſuch reading; but if he
" did underſtand it, I would aſk him, where would
" he expect a market to favour the linens of Ireland?
" Where will he find a market under Heaven for
" that manufacture, which now brings two millions
" annually into the kingdom? Will Portugal take
" them? Will Spain take them? Will France take
" them? No; we know they will not. Will Ruſſia,
" Germany, or Holland take them? They are your
" powerful rivals, and able to underſell you. Where
" then will you find a market, if England ſhuts her
" ports? Will you go to the Weſt Indies? You can-
" not go to the Engliſh colonies; they will be like
" Britain, there you can have no admittance.—The
" French, Spaniſh, and Portugueſe have ſhut their
" ports long ſince, your only market then is in the
" BANKRUPT States of North America, that have
" not money to pay their juſt debts, and many pro-
" vinces of which, if they had the money, have not
" perhaps the honeſty to do it.

" This bankrupt country is to give you the mar-
" ket Britain affords. No, no; cheriſh the market
" you have, you will never get ſo good; ſhe ever
" exports with bounty for you. And here let me
" obſerve the benefits of exporting, duty free, all
" our fabrics through her ports, which this ſettle-
" ment ſecures. You found the way for your linens

" to

" to foreign places through her ports, by her ca-
" pitals and extent of dealing; do not refuſe the
" like for your other fabrics—the proſperity of
" the linens ſhould teach you."

His Lordſhip having remarked on the force of this quotation, next called the attention of the Committee to the Speaker's general repreſentations that this country was not dependent on its connection with Great Britain for our linen trade, and that the lowering of the duties which exiſted in the trade between the two kingdoms would not be beneficial to Ireland. On the firſt point he read the following extract:

" The Hon. Gentleman complains of the report
" of the Engliſh Privy Councils, which ſay that to
" put Ireland and England on a footing of exact reci-
" procity as to linens, Ireland ought to give a bounty
" on the exportation of Engliſh linens, becauſe Eng-
" land gives a bounty on the exportation of Iriſh
" linens. Can any thing be more juſt? Yet Eng-
" land makes no ſuch demand, but is ready by this
" adjuſtment to give additional ſecurity to our linen
" trade for ever. If indeed the adjuſtment were to
" take away the benefits from Ireland, it would be
" a good cauſe for rejecting it; but as it for ever
" confirms all the advantages we derive from our

" linen

" linen trade, and binds England from making any
" law that can be injurious to it; ſurely Gentlemen
" that regard that trade, and whoſe fortunes and
" rent depend on its proſperity, will not entertain a
" moment's doubt about embracing the offer."

As to the point of lowering duties, he quoted the Speaker's opinion, expreſſed in 1785, in the following terms:

" Were a man to look for the country moſt ad-
" vantageous to ſettle manufactures in, what would be
" his choice? One where labour and proviſions are
" cheap, that is Ireland; and what he would next
" look for?—why to have a rich, extended and
" ſteady market near him, which England, ſtretched
" alongſide affords, and to eſtabliſh that market for
" this country is one great object of this ſyſtem.
" Gentlemen undervalue the reduction of Britiſh
" duties on our manufactures; I agree with them it
" may not operate ſoon, but we are to look forward
" in a final ſettlement, and it is impoſſible but that in
" time, with as good climate, equal natural powers,
" cheaper food, and fewer taxes, we muſt be able to
" ſell to them. When commercial jealouſy ſhall be
" baniſhed by final ſettlement, and trade take its na-
" tural and ſteady courſe, the kingdoms will ceaſe to
" look to rivalſhip; each will make that fabric which
" it can do cheapeſt, and buy from the other what it
" cannot

" cannot make ſo advantageouſly. Labour will be " then truly employed to profit, not diverted by du- " ties, bounties, jealouſies or legiſlative interference " from its natural and beneficial courſe; this ſyſtem " will attain its real object, conſolidating the ſtrength " of the remaining parts of the Empire, by encou- " raging the communications of their market among " themſelves, with preference to every part againſt all " ſtrangers."

Having ſhortly commented upon theſe extracts, by which he conceived the Speaker to be ſelf-confuted, his Lordſhip next adverted to what the Speaker had aſſerted as to the linen trade. He ſtated that on an average of ſeven years, the number of yards exported were,

To Great Britain	-	35,648,706
To the Britiſh colonies	-	1,259,868
	Total	36,998,574
To foreign countries	-	4,762,084
	Total	41,760,658

He ſtated the value of linen exported to England for 7 years, taking in cambrick and linen yarn, and eſtimating Iriſh linen at 1s. 10d. per yard, which is higher than the cuſtom valuation, but nearer the truth it

 amounted

amounted to 3,153,868l. He then ſhewed the advantage which we derived by the Britiſh duties of 37 per cent. on foreign linens, and the ſacrifice which Great Britain made to give us the advantage of her markets. The value of Iriſh linens conſumed in Great Britain for 7 years, at 1s. 10d. per yard. was 3,038,630l.—A duty of 37 per cent. in this ſum would amount to 1,124,293l. ſo that the people of Great Britain, in one view of the ſubject, pay dearer for their linens than they need, by upwards of one million ſterling a year, or, in another view of the ſubject, ſuffer duties of one million a year to be impoſed on their own people, which would otherwiſe be raiſed on the manufactures of Ireland. Or if the Iriſh manufacture could not come into competition, under ſuch a duty with the foreign fabrick, it would be raiſed on the foreign, to the excluſion of the Iriſh linens. But were Iriſh linens ſubject to the ſame duty as foreign linens, viz. 37l. per cent. they would be totally excluded from the Britiſh market. The quantity now furniſhed by Ireland would be ſupplied from abroad, from which Great Britain would levy a duty of 1,124,293l. which ſhe now loſes by the favour ſhewn to Iriſh linens in admitting them duty free to her market. That this would be the caſe appears clearly from the fact that 16,000,000 yards of foreign linen found their way into Great Britain in the courſe of the laſt year,

notwith-

notwithſtanding the heavy duty to which they were liable, which proves that our linen could in no degree enter into a competition with foreign linen in the Britiſh market, and that we owe the command which we have of that market to the liberality of Great Britain, a liberality which ſhe extends to us at the expence of above a million ſterling a year; or in other words, we owe it to the bounty of the Britiſh Parliament, and not to the ſupport of the Iriſh Legiſlature.

But it was ſaid that the linen manufacture was to be encouraged by Great Britain, on a compact that Ireland ſhould relinquiſh the woollen trade. The value of Engliſh woollens imported by Ireland was for three years ending 1793, 599,350l. The value of the average for three years to 1796, was 674,000l. At the ſame period the value of our linens exported to Great Britain was above 3,000,000l. and was that a compact on the juſtice or equity of which any reaſonable man would rely, when the actual loſs to Great Britain on linens was nearly double the total value of the woollens imported into Ireland? He ſaid it was curious to hear the arguments of the Right Hon. Gentleman as to woollens and fuel. Firſt, he ſays we never can have an extenſive woollen trade, although he ſtates that we had an extenſive trade in woollens about 100 years ago;

then he argues the reſult of our want of fuel, yet he ſtates that we are not dependent on England, though England ſupplies us with fuel duty free. In anſwer to the argument of the Speaker that no Engliſh capital had arrived in conſequence of our free trade, his Lordſhip ſtated that this was attributable to the nature of our ſeparate legiſlatures, and the danger of ſeparation; but that as ſoon as there was one government and one law for the whole empire, Britiſh capital would naturally circulate in every part, when the means for employing and the ſecurity for improving it became general. He greatly lamented one part of the ſpeech of the Right Hon. Gentleman, in which he alluded to the poſſible ſeparation of the two countries, and the poſſibility of Ireland exiſting at leaſt commercially, if not politically, without Great Britain. The Right Hon. Gentleman had ever profeſſed himſelf a friend to the connexion of the two countries; it ſeemed to be inconſiſtent with all his former conduct, and was calculated to create impreſſions which might have an effect he could never intend. But one of the great arguments of the Speaker was, that the Union would diminiſh the ſecurities for the bounties on agriculture; what was the obvious anſwer to ſuch an inſinuation, but that the terms of the Union might render it impoſſible? but if the ſubject were to be left open, might not a time ariſe when a diſcontinuance of bounties throughout the empire generally would be a benefit? and if the arrangement of them were left to an imperial legiſlature,

giſlature, could the Hon. Gentleman aſſert it would not be ſafe in their diſcretion? or would he contend that the legiſlature of any empire could have an intereſt to impoveriſh one part of its dominions for the aggrandiſement of another? Was it not a dereliction of ſenſe and a proſtitution of talents to advance ſuch an argument? Another leading argument had been relied upon, that no Union could give ſecurity that it would not be infringed; and the income tax had been tortured into a proof that the terms of the Scotch Union had been violated. The feebleneſs of this argument had been long expoſed. The malt tax in Scotland had alſo been adduced as an inſtance; but ſo ſoon as it was examined, this inſtance was found untenable. But now the income tax was brought forward, and in order to apply it to the preſent purpoſe it was ſtated to be a land tax, and conſequently a breach of the articles of an Union. This however was notoriouſly not the caſe? It was made an expreſs article of Union that Scotland ſhould be ſubjected to the general taxes of the empire. How, therefore, a tax upon general income could be twiſted into a freſh and increaſed land tax, he could not conceive; it was no more a tax upon land, than a tax upon any article of conſumption which was purchaſed by the income ariſing out of land, was a tax upon land. But the ſecurity of the Scotch Union did not reſt upon the conſtruction of any little article, it reſted upon the ſecurity of a greater

principle:

principle: it reſted upon this ſecurity, that no Miniſter, no Parliament would be guilty of ſuch madneſs as for any paltry conſideration of profit or taxation to riſque the happineſs and connexion of the whole empire in a manner which would excite reſiſtance and juſtify ſeparation. He could have wiſhed the Speaker had been ſilent reſpecting the competency of Parliament. He had ſeen ſome obſervations in the reſolutions of the County of Louth, intimating a recurrence to firſt principles, which he could not too much reprobate, and had admired the diſcretion of the Right Hon. Gentleman in paſſing them without notice. He wiſhed he had obſerved the ſame diſcretion now. He conceived the principle of the competency of parliament was defined by the right of parliament to conſult in every caſe the good and the happineſs of the people, and that no man could queſtion its competency, who either knew or valued the conſtitution. But if ever ſuch a principle as the incompetency of Parliament ſhould be ſet up, there were few caſes to which it might not apply; it would be uſed by every enemy to the conſtitution, and fall like a firebrand among the people. His Lordſhip ſaid he would advert only to one argument more, which was, the imputation which had been made on thoſe ſpeeches which had ſtated our religious diſſenſions. It was uncandidly inſinuated that the object of thoſe ſpeeches was to encreaſe our religious animoſities. Their object was to ſhew that whilſt Ireland adhered to a ſe-

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parate legiſlature, we could not act leſs on a principle of religious jealouſy than we did; but that if United, our parliament, with the legiſlature of Great Britain, could act upon a more liberal ſyſtem of policy with entire ſecurity. His Lordſhip concluded by returning his thanks to the Committee for their attention, and ſaying that at ſo late an hour he would not detain them with further obſervations.

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